

AUTHORITATIVE FORECASTS IN FEMININE FASHIONS



WRITTEN FOR THE SUNDAY REPUBLIC.

America made the first shirt waist. That wonderfully comfortable article of apparel now clamored for by the women of every clime is as much the product of American inventive genius as the wonders of the telephone and telegraph. The wizard of style-making is to be in the future American. That sounds wonderful, doesn't it? But it is true.

American taste for American women is likely to have a great impulse in future generations. American taste, American art, American beauty, American intelligence are more than keeping pace with the best European productions. Out of all that accumulation of growth in higher directions comes a disposition to have just what is right, is beautiful, is fit to wear.

Is the American woman to go down to posterity as the shirt-waist woman? Are the future generations to refer to the beginning of American art in dress as the shirt-waist period? Are the classic forms of Parisian gowns to give way to the dictates of the beautiful American woman, who now dominates not only her own wardrobe but that of her European sisters, because they love to imitate her?

If imitation is the sincerest flattery, then the praise that is accorded to the American woman is not alone idle, but is sincere to the uttermost degree. For all the fashionable world—Vienna, Berlin and London, as well as Paris—are crying for American-made shirt waists.

Stylish New Gowns Designed for American Shirt Waists.

The new gowns are designed for the American shirt waist. Even in the strongest types of Parisian art—the shirt-waist form, the blouse form, the separate-waist idea born of the American shirt waist—are articles of the greatest interest in the feminine wardrobe of world-wide interest.

As Virot and Worth of to-day now gaze upon the world-famous beauties portrayed by Gainsborough, Reynolds, Romney, Boucher and Watteau, so the American designer in the days to come will seek suggestive inspiration by a visit to the galleries where will be hung the lifelike portraits of the women of the present generation done by such masters of the brush as Chardin, Van Porter, Madrazo, Bordini. The artistic charm to such women as Mrs. Burke-Roché, Mrs. Clarence Mackay, Mrs. Harry Payne Whitney, Mrs. Alfred Vanderbilt and Mrs. Charles Alexander

will be the inspiration for the future creators of the charming costumes that will only serve to still further enhance the beauty of American women of future centuries and make the men of all nations still acknowledge her queen of the world.

The shirt waist in all its fascinating simplicity is one article of dress of which the American girl was the original source of inspiration, while her admiration and fondness for it has served to impose this style of bodice on the world's foremost fashion creators.

Paris Now Looks to New York for Inspirations.

Paris, with her intensely artistic atmosphere and surroundings, now looks to New York as the true and only source of suggestion and inspiration for ideas regarding this unique article of attire. The French are quick and eager to appreciate the value of the artistic note wherever sounded, so to-day they bow before the American designer of shirt waists of what-soever fabric they may be composed, and vie with one another in reproducing their artistic qualities for the benefit of the Parisienne, the grande dame sans noblesse and devoted to "le sporting life" or of the demimonde, and so most thoroughly appreciative of all artistic novelties.

To such an extent is the French admiration for the American separate waist carried that numbers are now sent directly from New York to Paris. This is done largely in a private way, and the Parisienne who counts several American women among her amies intimates is to be accounted blessed in these days, for her last word of farewell to any of them is sure to be: "And when you return to us next year, chère petite, you will, n'est-ce pas, bring me some of those adorable waists of soie, of gaze, de batiste-tout, tout, I love them all!"

Soon Made Happy by Receiving These Delicate Garments.

So she is made happy in a few weeks by the receipt of a huge box of these filmy and delicate garments, while her friends must perforce put up with the copies made in the French atelier.

Knowing that there is time and place suitable for all articles of dress, our richest women have every season large supplies of shirt waists. The Newport set is devoted to it, both in silk and all the dainty wash materials in mercerized effects. Mrs. Hermann Oelrichs, with her businesslike

and practical direction of her grand establishment, has adopted the shirt-waist suit as the costume of rigueur for her early morning inspection of mansion, servants' quarters, grounds and stables. This is made of some of the new cotton materials in chambray or madras effects and with its stitchings and tuckings is severely simple in fashion, yet exquisite in fit and finish. If the day be cool she will frequently be seen a few hours later in a finely tailored gown, from beneath whose open blouse peeps forth the shining front of a prettily embroidered satin shirt. Maise and dauphine or marquis blue are the shades generally adopted by this elegant dame, and most becoming they are.

For an appreciation of the shirt waist in all its simplicity of design, whether in flannel, silk or lawn, one must turn to no less a personage than Mrs. Andrew Carnegie, who has chosen it for her favorite costume for the long trips over the hills and dales of her Scottish home at Skibo Castle. One of her chief delights in this home across the water is her ability to walk ten or fifteen miles without going off the estate, and thus to have perfect freedom in the choice of costume. Simplicity is the leading characteristic of Mrs. Carnegie's costumes at all times—the refined simplicity which is the height of art, and which is so apt to cost such a pretty penny that it is only attainable by the woman with the purse of a millionaire. A good story is told of her recent visit to the establishment of one of the greatest of Parisian couturiers, to which one of her titled English friends had recommended her as being the place of all others where she could get the elegant simplicity she so much admires. The quiet lady dressed in brown was not recognized as the wife of America's great iron king as she entered the reception room, and it is far from her nature to announce her prominence.

New Waists in Silk Are Ornamented With Embroideries.

So the great master glanced at her, and with a thousand regrets was sorry that it would be some months before he could find time to attend to madame's wants. This soon reached the ear of Lady —, who at once wrote to monsieur in regard to the incident. Many and humble were the apologies, but the great American lady has been ever since thoroughly convinced that a certain master will never make a gown for

her, no matter how elegantly simple his designs.

The new shirt waists in silk are ornamented with beautiful embroideries in silk, ribbon, tinsel, coral and chenille. The embroidery effects most modish for the silk waists are of the exquisite designs of the Louis XVI period, and some of the dinner and theater waists are marvels of the most delicate needlework. The "Zaza" is a choice example of this style of bodice, worked in the most beautifully soft and harmonious shades of color.

The small velvet buttons, each with its own bit of fine needlework, is fresh evidence of the height to which artistic finish is now carried by both manufacturer and designer.

Have you any idea, madam, of the salary received by the designers of these delectable confections? Oh, a paltry \$5,000 a year, and, perhaps, even a trifle more.

"Gibson" Waist Is Appropriate for the Litesome Form.

This is for the man or woman who is clever enough to cater satisfactorily to your desires in shirt waists alone. As for costumes and wraps, there we have another story. The "Gibson" waist was made for the "Gibson girl," and right well it becomes her litesome form. But, pray, beware of it. O sister of maturer years and more robust form. It were better you had never been born than that you should don one of these smart waists in the hope of adding to your many fascinating qualities. For you, is the "Duchess" the style adopted and named after the latest American addition to the ranks of English duchesses, the Duchess of Manchester. Off in her Irish castle she has not forgotten her Cincinnati home, and her adoption of the "Duchess" waist is only fresh evidence of her natural tastes and inclinations.

The English woman has conceived the greatest fondness for the American shirt waist, but in the land of fogs and soft voices it has been rechristened the blouse (pronounced bluse), and blouses she will have by the score. Of pink, of blue, of white, of green, all colors of the rainbow and many others besides, and of every material known to woman and manufacturer.

But, alas and alack, she does not fit into her blouse the way the American fits into the shirt waist.

Trim, Natty Appearance of the American Shirt Waist.

When it reaches the shores of Albion it is certainly rightly named, for as made and worn by the English it is oftentimes of a blousy appearance. But the American waist—what a joy it is in its trim, natty appearance and how quickly it brightens the costume and adds to the charms of the most charming woman!

The "Zaza" waist has been so named for that fascinating actress, Mrs. Leslie Carter, who finds no other attire so appropriate and so becoming for her shopping tours. She was seen in earnest consultation with an artist milliner the other day, and with her magnificent sable cape slipped from her shoulders it disclosed a delightful waist composed of Cassini (lavender) satin, adorned with insertions of richest Irish point lace, while the tiny revers were edged with a tracery of gold-laid work, on which were touches of hand-embroidery in black silk. How well the brown of the sable combined with the shining lavender to throw out the greater glory of her Titian red hair. A woman with such a highly trained eye for color combination could hold an audience by the power of her gown alone, but when to it is added all her other dainty, mechanic qualities, then, indeed, is the spell complete.

Blouse of Louise XV Period

Oh, the sweet simplicity, the exquisite daintiness of the thin white waist, be it in mousseline de soie, embroidered mull, of sheerest nainsook with lace inlets and insertions, or of fine needlework—all are things of beauty. The "Shepherdess," the "Maid Marian" and the "West End" are every one beautiful examples of the latest novelties in the sweetly simple fashion. How any woman can resist arraying herself in these any more than the most hard-boiled of the other sex can resist her fascinations when thus clothed surpasses the mind of mere mortal to conjecture. The low-neck waist, the waist with the lace yoke, the short-sleeve waist, the one with a deep cuff, the one with ruffles and the one with lace incrustations, long may they linger with us to lighten your charms, dear American girl, even though this be to the peace of mind of mankind in general and your devoted servant in particular.

Exquisite Daintiness of the Thin, White Waist.

Many attempts have been made by the Parisian inventors of modes to oust the separate waist from its firm place in the affections of womankind at large and American femininity in particular, but alas! they have been defeated by the persistency of the American girl, who clings to the waist as one of the most suitable and serviceable, as well as charming, garments for the climate of this country.

To-day there are men especially engaged in making materials for shirt-waist use

alone. There are the linen batistes, gazes, mousselines de soie, cotton poplins, momis, cloths, waists embroidered in the piece, madrases, chambrays, corduroys, plaques, and so on through a long line of pretty fabrics woven in designs particularly appropriate to this modish waist.

Long Line of Pretty Fabrics Woven to Order.

The colors? Dreams of beauty, soft and delicate, smart and stunning, somber and sad, so that the sensitive or sympathetic woman, among the large variety with which she supplies herself each season, can readily find the one which accords with her mood, however transient. Can anything give more eclat as the finishing touch to a costume than a silky gauze waist in a design of ecru and black broken stripes? Unconsciously it recalls the mechanism of that delightfully naughty Monte Carlo. For resplendent elegance one selects the spring-time colors of printanier, mauve or dauphine blue as found in the *crêpe de Chine*, *peau de soles* or *peau de cygne*. Thus might one run through the gamut of colors of the artist's palette as well as the very phases of a woman's mood, changeable, as the great bard has said, as an April day, yet ever would be found a correspondence between mood and color. Matters of such moment can safely be entrusted to the intuitive instincts of the American girl to develop and appropriate in the highest manner to her own use.

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